

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 01206 301244Z
ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 1206

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, LY, US
SUBJECT: US-LIBYAN RELATIONS

1. DURING CALL ON DIRECTOR FOR AMERICAN AFFAIRS, TAJUDDIN JARBI, AT FOREIGN MINISTRY AUGUST 30 TO DELIVER PRESIDENT CARTER'S ID GREETING TO COLONEL QADHAFI, JARBI REFERRED TO OUR EARLIER CONVERSATIONS AND TO CONGRESSMAN SIKES' RECENT VISIT, AND REITERATED LIBYAN DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. HE SAID HE HOPED A DECISION WOULD BE MADE TO PERMIT THE SALE OF CIVILIAN BOEING AIRCRAFT TO LIBYA AS A FIRST STEP.

2. JARBI SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD SENT MESSAGES TO RULERS OF THE GULF STATES EXPLAINING U.S. POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE SAID HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT IT WOULD BE VERY USEFUL IF A SIMILAR MESSAGE COULD BE SENT TO COLONEL QADHAFI.

3. WE, OF COURSE, WOULD NOT EXPECT AN EXPLANATION OF OUR MIDDLE EAST POLICY TO CHANGE THE BASICALLY HOSTILE ATTITUDE OF THE LIBYAN GOVT TOWARD CURRENT MIDDLE EAST PEACE INITIATIVES. HOWEVER, THERE WOULD SEEM TO BE LITTLE TO LOSE IN KEEPING THE LIBYAN GOVT INFORMED OF OUR POSITION. SUCH AN EXCHANGE MIGHT EVEN SOMEWHAT ATTENUATE LIBYAN ATTACKS ON OUR MOTIVES AND POLICIES.

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I SUGGEST, THEREFORE, THAT WHEN MESSAGES ARE BEING SENT TO PERIPHERAL ARAB COUNTRIES, CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO INCLUDING LIBYA AMONG THEM. THE BEST LEVEL TO MAKE A POLICY IMPACT HERE WOULD BE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO COLONEL QADHAFI, BUT A LESSER LEVEL COULD ALSO BE USEFUL. IF THERE IS NOTHING THAT THE DEPARTMENT WOULD WISH TO CONVEY AT PRESENT, PERHAPS

THERE WILL BE AN OCCASION FOLLOWING THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT.

4. IN RECEIVING PRESIDENT CARTER'S ID GREETING TO QADHAFI, JARBI ASKED WHETHER THERE WOULD BE A REPLY TO COLONEL QADHAFI'S JULY 4 MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT OR A MESSAGE TO QADHAFI ON THE OCCASION OF SEPTEMBER 1 REVOLUTION DAY. I SAID THERE WOULD BE NO REPLY TO THE JULY 4 MESSAGE AS IT WAS NOT CUSTOMARY TO ENGAGE IN SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGES ON SUCH OCCASIONS. I SAID I HAD NOT YET RECEIVED A SEPTEMBER 1 MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO QADHAFI.
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